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The **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** is again urging the Obama administration to recognize Iraq as a "country of particular concern" for its religious freedom violations and sectarian violence. The call follows the deadly attack of a Baghdad church by Al Qaeda-connected militants on Sunday,

[Baptist Press](#)

reports. "We recognize the promptness with which the Iraqi government responded to the hostage situation at the church," USCIRF chair Leonard Leo said. "In the wake of this brazen and senseless attack, we urge the Iraqi government to proactively heighten security a Christian and other minority religious sites and the United States government to increase its support of such efforts."